

# **Wastewater Operator Certification Program Advisory Committee**

## **Meeting Summary**

### **April 4, 2001**

Attendees included: Tammie McClure, Russ Glaser, Jill Parker, Tim Pelton, Don Proctor, John Schoening, Chris Sheridan

#### **Welcome & Introductions**

Welcomed John Schoening a Group III operator with the City of Granite Falls to the committee.

#### **Review Agenda**

No changes made.

#### **Committee Membership**

Members requested that a list of members and their terms be a part of this summary (please see attached).

*Vacant positions on committee:*

- Need two Group I representatives
- Need one Group II representative, and
- Need one Public Works Director

*Members whose term ends December 31<sup>st</sup>:*

- Russ Glaser, Group III representative from the West Side
- Chris Sheridan, Group IV representative from the West Side

#### **Professional Growth**

It was recommended that training instructors/presenters be allowed to receive CEU credit toward their professional growth requirement (for certified operators only) in the same way their students do. Instructors would not receive credit for time spent developing or researching the information presented in the training class.

The committee discussed the intention of the professional growth requirement (i.e., operators should get credit for acquiring knowledge, experience, and/or education and not just credits and/or CEUs). The committee agreed that acquiring knowledge, experience, and/or education with regard to wastewater is the ultimate goal; however, to date, the only way that we have to quantify and monitor the amount of training an operator has received is by assigning CEUs. Tammie explained that if a trainer can provide a course timeline, show that a training is relevant, and that it has a qualified instructor she would assign CEUs to that training. Tammie also explained that the CEUs that she is able to assign are valid for wastewater operator certification in Washington State only. The committee raised questions about what it would take for Tammie to become officially approved to assign a CEU nationwide. Tammie will find out and bring the information to the next meeting.

### **Program Policies**

The committee recommended that one out of the three CEUs needed to meet the professional growth requirement be specific to wastewater treatment. If adopted, draft guidance would need to be developed and the new policy would go into affect January 1, 2004 (the beginning of the next professional growth period).

Tammie informed the committee that a decision had been made by Ecology with regard to counting supervisory experience toward the required domestic wastewater treatment plant operating experience when applying for certification or for certification upgrade. "The regulation defines requirements for certifying treatment plant operators, not managers. The relevant work experience is work that must be done on-site." In other words, if the work could be done at another location, it is not considered to be "operating experience."

### **Reported Information**

#### *Professional Growth:*

The new professional growth period began January 1, 2001 and runs through December 31, 2003. Approximately 300 operators lost their certification December 31, 2000 due either to not meeting their professional growth requirement or non-renewal.

#### *October 2000 and February 2001 Exams:*

February	<u>Exams Taken</u>	<u>Passed</u>
Group I/OIT	35	28
Group II	28	24
Group III	21	11
Group IV	16	<u>14</u>
		77% Passed

October		
Group I/OIT	23	18
Group II	27	23
Group III	26	19
Group IV	12	<u>11</u>
		80% Passed

#### *I-722:*

On November 30, 2000, Thurston County Superior Court stayed the implementation of I-722. On February 23, 2001, I-722 was declared unconstitutional and null and void by Thurston County Superior Court. There is a good chance that the decision will be appealed. Ecology did not implement this initiative due to the injunction and now will not be implementing it. In other words, Ecology will operate under the law as the court

has defined it. If later rulings find that it is constitutional, we will develop a strategy for implementing it at that time.

**Next Meeting**

Wednesday, November 14, 2001 in Lacey